D. Wood Carving and Basket Weaving

Wood carving and basket weaving will be mentioned here briefly for continuity. The following wooden objects have already been mentioned: the chair (p. 181), the whisk (p. 199), the winnowing basin (p. 201), the spoon (p. 206), the mortar (p. 200), and the honey stick)p. 205). The text illustrations round out the picture of all the main types of wooden dishes and pails. [Picture. Repair of Wooden Article.] An informed Hottentot told me that the wooden vessels mentioned, which today have been supplanted chiefly by European metalware, are still made here and there, half boring them out and half scraping them out with an instrument which is called *//gare·s. The latter consists of a knife blade bent at right angles to its wooden handle. Unfortunately I did not succeed in acquiring such a tool.

Of interest is the way in which the Hottentots mend wooden dishes. Leaks and cracks in the dishes and pots are sealed with tough root fibres. To the right and left of the crack (a), holes are made in the wood and a root thread (b) is drawn through the holes across the crack, so that it bridges it on the outside. [Picture (244 and 245). Wooden dishes. 1/4 natural size. a, d, e: //hoëti, usually milk containers. h and i: the same with root mending. c and f: !ao//hoëti, milk pails, "neck bamboo." g: ≠aigaĩ //hoës, "foot bamboo." b: !ore·s, dish used for eating.] [246] A cross thread (c) is twisted around these bridges in the way the illustration shows. Only two parallels of the latter thread are shown. The scale is enlarged so that the method of twisting could be seen. Next to * is the end of the cross string; it is firmly fastened with several twistings. The entire repaired area is rubbed with fat. Gradually enough dust collects in the root weaving so that the hole is completely glued together.

Except for making mats, basket weaving is insignificant. Besides the nara sieves (cf. p. 199) only the fish baskets should be mentioned, which the Hottentots use for catching fish in the Fish River. I did not get to see one.

E. Use of Clay, Stone and Metal

Work with the above materials has remained at the most primitive stages.

1. Formerly the Hottentots made simple urn-shaped pots by kneading and baking them out of clay and sand. The fragments found in

[Refer to diagram on p. 59(A).—Analyst]

old snail refuse heaps along the southern coast from the Cape of Good Hope to Port Nolloth prove this. They no longer make them. But prehistoric time in Namaland is relatively recent; historical information about the Hottentot people dates back only a few centuries. It was, therefore, worthwhile to look for one of those old clay vessels, prehistoric fragments of which I had found buried in the sand along the coast near Port Nolloth, in the huts of the present-day Hottentots. The only one I found, after much vain effort, is pictured here. [Picture. Baked Clay Vessel of the Old Kind. 1/4 natural size.] The clay vessel is called ǂgo/asūs, i.e. clay pot. Another word for it *kʟoe·kʟoesūs, was of interest to me, since it was the only case, in which the old, native tribal designation of the Hottentots (see p. 322)[1] came to my ears.

On the one hand imported European wares have replaced the clay vessels. On the other hand the impoverished Namib nomads [247] have sunk back to the lowest imaginable cultural state in their cooking utensils, since, instead of pots, they put the breastbone of an ostrich, called *//gūs, on the fire.

2. Stone, as found in nature, today plays a subordinate role in the household of the Hottentots. [Picture. Stone Mill for Hand Use. 1/4 natural size.]

Only one stone utensil is as indispensible today as formerly: the handmill. It consists of two stones, a thin flat stone, */ui aib - always masculine gender) as a base and a round stone*, */uiams (always feminine

*The gender of the endings of both words is emphasized, because their contrast in this connection is preserved intact and this type of opposites is typical of Hottentot language usage. The flat stone is always masculine because it is angular and slim (it has a large surface area in relation to its mass), while the compact round stone recalls the round thickset forms of the female body and therefore has a feminine ending.

In the neighborhood of Kulub there are two watering places next each other, *ǂkʟanu·b and *ǂkʟanu·s, each on a slope of a high rise of primary rock. One of the hills is slender with a more pointed crest. This watering place is differentiated sharply from the other

[1] [i.e., p. 120 of this translation.--Analyst]

415
●323

[p.246]

Baked clay vessel of the old kind.
1/4 natural size.

lands among them. The speared reeds are supposed to be cows and are 857
therefore called go/mati. The children themselves feel like victorious 526
soldiers who are dividing their booty by games of chance. [Picture. Position of the hand in the game of raffling booty.]

The imitative games of the Hottentot children are particularly worthy 857
of notice as they represent the only stage in their life in which an artistic 524
drive seeks definite outlet. The half-grown boys between the ages of about 323
eight and sixteen make toys from clay, and bake the clay in a fire to give 532
it nuances of color as well as hardness.

The figure of a white man is in the middle of the first group, standing behind a horse. [See Figure I.][1] The narrow [311] high bridge of the nose of our race astonishes the Hottentot with his wide low nose and provokes him to caricature. On the right next to this figure is a smoking, native woman with [steatopygia]. Behind her, with the pigs, is a boy by an iron three-legged Boer cooking pot. The wooden nose piece is interesting in the riding ox. [Pictures I., II. The fat-tailed wether is bucking a billy goat. The kneeling guard aiming his rifle with one closed eye shows careful observation.] [312] Figure II shows a pair of ostriches on the left, the male emphasized by its natural ornament of feathers and by its size. The artist, at any rate, did not see the giraffe in Namaland, but probably in some zoo in the Cape colony. The oryx antelope and the springbok are recognizable by their pointed horns and lyre shaped horns respectively. Of the two scorpions with their threatening stingers raised up, the one on the right is better made. The young herdboy has plenty of opportunity of observing baboons. The events reproduced here he has obviously observed carefully. The other figures represent a frog, an iguana and a turtle.

The last group of clay figures (Fig. III) represents an ox wagon, which the old Boer with his long whip directs from the front box, while the native guide seeks the way. [Picture. Figure III]. I would like to point out especially the naturalistic reproduction of the lead oxen that are pushing powerfully against the yoke.

In these sculptural attempts one can recognize everywhere the ability to reproduce the characteristic element of the object from direct observation, without contemplation. It is the same primitiveness that differentiates the drawings of prehistoric man from those of our children, who reproduce objects more intellectually (with whom they are now being closely compared).

It is strange that the Hottentot's undoubted ability to reproduce things in sculpture is extinguished when the age of childish games is passed.

[1] [Figures refer to p. 112B. — Analyst]

1: Schultze--112B N-5 (1903-1905) 1907 FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

857
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532
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[p. 311]

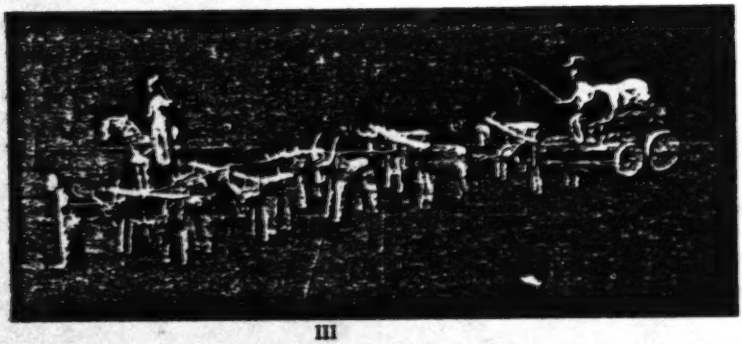
I.

The fat-tailed wether is bucking a billy goat. The kneeling guard aiming his rifle with one closed eye shows careful observation.

II

1: Schultze--112C N-5 (1903-1905) 1907 FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

857
524
532
323



III

An ox wagon. The old Boer with his long whip directs from the front box, while the native guide seeks the way.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama
Cape Hottentots

letting it dry soak the mass in lukewarm milk or water, then suck it and chew it in small lumps. A length of prepared fibre is then taken and twisted between the palm of the right hand and the naked thigh, the end of the fibre being held in the left hand. This done, the process is repeated with other lengths of fibre, the lengths being joined up as occasion arises, until sufficient has been made. The resulting string is strong and even, comparing very well with the machine-made article. It is used as thread for sewing together the reed mats for the huts, as well as for making the snares required by the hunter. From it are also knotted net bags, used in the hut for holding various odds and ends, and serving on the march as a rucksack for the skin blankets. Baskets, sieves, and fish-traps woven from reed and flexible twigs are mentioned by some writers, but no description is given of their manufacture.[1]

The art of making pottery, formerly found among all the Hottentots, was lost soon after the Europeans came among them, although as late as the early years of last century earthenware vessels made by themselves were still noted among the Naman. From the descriptions available of these pots, as well as from specimens found or preserved, it seems that in shape and manner of construction they are generally similar to those formerly found among the Cape Bushmen. The most common form is that of a large-bellied urn with narrow rounded base, small mouth, and two ears through which a cord can be passed in order to suspend it. Other pots of the same style are quite cylindrical, with almost flat bases, while in others the base is slightly rounded and larger than the rest of the pot. They are often ornamented round the neck with rows of dots or short broad lines, apparently produced by incising. They are unglazed and generally somewhat thick, although a few have been found rather thin and evenly built throughout.[2]

Kolb states that each family among the Cape Hottentots made its own pots, modelled by hand by the women. The clay was obtained from termite heaps, cleared of sand and gravel, and kneaded together with the ants' eggs mixed in it. A lump was placed on a smooth flat stone and modelled into the shape required. Next it was carefully smoothed inside and outside by hand, and exposed to the sun for a couple of days. When perfectly dry, it was finally put in a

[1] Schultze, op. cit., 241–4.
[2] Schönland, "Hottentot and Bushman Pottery in the Collection of the Albany Museum," 25–32, pl. ii; Schultze, op. cit., 246 and fig.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

323 hole in the ground and burned by a fire around and inside it, till it was baked through and hard. Each family as a rule possessed several of these pots, for water and milk, and for cooking.[1]

322 [177] Besides these pots the Hottentots also made wooden milk bowls and pails, dishes, and eating vessels. These are now largely replaced among the Naman by European hardware, but the craft is still kept up among the more independent families. There is no detailed description of the process of manufacture. Apparently the utensils are fashioned entirely by cutting and boring, no fire or other hot object being employed. All wood-carving is done by the men. The block of wood is shaped and smoothed on the outside with a knife, then hollowed out inside, partly by cutting and partly by boring, by means of a semicircular iron blade fixed in a wooden haft. Some of the milk pails in shape closely resemble the earthenware pots, even having ears of the same style for suspension. Wooden spoons, pestles and mortars, */nara* drills, walking sticks and kirris are also made, and within recent times the more expert craftsmen, aided by new and better tools, have also begun to make tables, chairs, and bedposts for their household furniture.[2]

321 Spoons and *buchu* powder-boxes are made by the women from tortoise-shells, while the men cut the horns of animals into receptacles for fat, for odd substances used for medicinal and magical purposes, and for gunpowder, as well as into trumpets used for signalling in war. Formerly also the tusks of elephants were cut with a knife into rings used as armlets. The manufacture of stone implements
324 does not appear to have been practised at all by the Hottentots, at least within historical times. Whether they did so at one time we have no means of telling, but in the light of our present knowledge there is no good reason for assuming that, as in the case of the Bushmen, it is an art they have lost. The only work they do in stone is the cutting and boring of serpentine into pipes by means of a knife. We know also that they formerly used sharp flakes of quartz for making cuts on a person's body in some of their ceremonies, but there is nothing to indicate that these flakes were worked in any special way. Unworked stones are used to support the cooking pot over the fire, and a handmill is formed by a thin flat stone serving as a hearth on

[1] Op. cit., 116–17; cf. Graevenbroeck, op. cit., 24–5.
[2] Schultze, op. cit., 244–6; Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten," 335; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 27.

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CAP. XIII.

De Supellectili.

000 Si quis in supellectilis partes inquirat, antiqua opus est mente revolvat secula; ubi *) *Thebanum Cratem* populo rem familiarem donasse, & solitudinem delegisse, arbores plurimas & frugiferas prae uno baculo sprevisse, ac villas ornatissimas una perula mutasse comperiet. Sola quippe pera & baculus olim *Cynicae*, nunc *Hotteniotticae* gestamina familiae sunt; quae olim *Diogeni* & *Antistheni*, ea nunc *Hottentottis*, idem quod Imperatoribus paludamentum, quod Regibus diadema, quod Pontificibus galerum, quod lituus auguribus, sunt. Neque in hoc *Diogeni*, cum magno *Macedonum Rege* de regni veritate certabundo, *baculoque* sceptri, & *vasculo* solii vice glorianti, cedunt, semper sua sorte contenti. Utuntur tamen nonnumquam *poculis*, ex collectis in litore *conchyliis*, vel ex comestarum prius *testudinum* (quas *Sirigoos* vocitant, & in cineribus tostas edunt, ac pro *tabaci* frustulo peregrinis divendunt) operimentis: quibus si careant, cavata manu cum *Cynico* aquam hauriunt. Cibum quandoque rejecta in testa, alias sub cineribus apparant, secus cruda vorantes. Attamen peculio ditiores exquisitas ex argilla *ollas*, coquinae destinatas, alii ex arborum truncis cibarios *alveolos* oblongos conficiunt.

*) Vide Apulejum in apol. pro se ipso. (See Apuleius, *Apologia*.) (Chap. 22. The whole passage from *Thebanum Cratem* to *solii vice glorianti* is taken, with slight adaptations, from this chapter of Apuleius. B.F.)

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415 31) Cf. de la Loubère, *Description du Royaume de Siam* (Paris, 1691), vol. ii, 109: "When we offered them brandy, they picked up as receptacle the first suitable shell they saw lying on the ground, and after blowing through it used it for drinking".

● 323 32) The art of making pottery, formerly found among all the Hottentots, was lost soon after the Europeans came among them. From the descriptions available of these pots, as well as from specimens found or preserved, it appears that the most common form was that of a large-bellied urn with narrow rounded base, small mouth, and two ears through which a cord was passed for purposes of suspension. Other pots of the same style were quite cylindrical, with almost flat bases, while in others the base was slightly rounded and larger than the rest of the pot.

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. XIII.

Furniture.

Whoever makes enquiry into the matter of their furniture will need to ponder the examples of the ancient world, where he will find that the Theban Crates made a gift of his property to the people, and chose the wilderness, scorned his parks and orchards for a single staff, and took in exchange for his splendid villas one wallet for his back. For as in the old days the Cynics were contented merely with a wallet and a stick, so now are the Hottentots. The wallet and the stick are to the Hottentots of to-day as they were to the Cynics in antiquity, the equivalent of the General's cloak, the King's diadem, the bonnet of the high priest, and the augur's staff. Nor in this matter do they yield to Diogenes who contended with the great king of Macedon about true kingship, glorying in his staff rather than in a sceptre, in his wallet more than in a throne; for the Hottentots are always contented with their lot. They do sometimes however use cups, either shells which they have collected on the seashore[31]) or the shells of tortoises which they have eaten. These they call *stripoos*. They roast them in the ashes and eat them, and sell them to strangers for a little tobacco. But if they lack a cup, then, like the Cynics, they drink water from the hollow of their hand. Their food they prepare sometimes in a pot that has been thrown away, sometimes under the ashes; otherwise they devour it raw. But the richer among them make most beautiful clay pots for use in cooking,[32]) while others from the trunks of trees make oblong troughs for food.[33])

The pots were often ornamented round the neck with rows of dots or short broad lines, apparently produced by incising. They were unglazed and generally somewhat thick, although a few have been found rather thin and evenly built throughout. (Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples*, 313.) Grevenbroek (see below, p. 251) briefly describes their mode of manufacture.

[32]) The Hottentots made not only eating vessels, but also milk bowls, pails and dishes out of wood. These utensils were apparently fashioned entirely by cutting and boring, no fire or other hot object being employed. Their different shapes and mode of manufacture are summarised by Schapera, op. cit., 314.

[See 10: Grevenbroek, this File, ent. 116, p. 251. — Analyst]

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

The chief riches of the natives in our parts are arms and cattle. They have no fixed abodes, but move from place to place carrying their homes with them on their wanderings. Their oxen, travelling at a very rapid pace, carry all their burdens, even men and pack-saddles, on their backs. Where meadows and pastures invite the flocks and herds, there they scatter themselves with their little huts, living the life of wandering friars. Till even shadows fall they pasture their flocks; at night they enclose them, as I said above; then to the clapping of hands and stamping of feet, with wanton gestures they ply the dance beneath the presiding moon far into the stilly hours of night.

When changing their terrain they abandon those enfeebled by sickness or age. The man to be left is shut up in a hut with a supply of provisions, water, and fire to furnish forth his funeral feast, but destitute of every other aid. This singular cruelty is practised by the natives near us, who are the most barbarous of their race. They regard neither sex nor kinship in thus rejecting all obligations to maintain the sick and old.[75]

The women make the huts, and in this wise. Numerous rods and poles are fixed in the earth and bent over in the shape of an arch, forming a hemispherical, convex, tortoise-shell-like frame. The sides are woven across with pliant withies. The hut is about five feet high, the diameter does not exceed twelve feet, and there is a little door three feet high looking to the East. The huts are covered with skilfully woven mats of rush or reed, or sometimes even with skins to afford protection against the inclemency of the sky and the raging winds. This roof covers the whole household, including the newborn lambs and the cows with their calves. In the centre is an ever-glowing hearth to keep all warm and cook the food, and there for the most part the native women pass their time, discharging their hearts in gossip, and laughing and joking, the best of friends and cronies. Picture to yourself the elegant salon!

The women also make earthenware vessels quite skilfully out of moistened clay. They dig up the clay and carry it home, where it is cut up into portions the size of a walnut. These are placed on a skin and sprinkled with a little water from time to time to prevent them getting too dry, and exposed to the sun for two or three days. They are then kneaded into cylinders, like bottles, each an ell in

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enough food to support their aged parents. "But sometimes," he adds, "even if there was food enough, and if people, especially women, who had cattle of their own, gave suspicion that they secretly did mischief by practising witchcraft, they were left to die from starvation" (Tavel-//Gosse, 88, 90).

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694)1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

fundo aut basi ollae destinatos: hinc pari modo testam profundam latamque ex arbitrio et proportionis norma construunt, eamque digitorum et conchae marinae ope, introrsum et extrorsum perpolitam laevigatamque, rubro colore, (minio subacto) quaquaversum illinunt, et sub eodem tecto ubi elaborata, pelle aut storea in diem unum alterumve probè cooperiam, ne nimio aëre aut vento, justo citius siccata, rimas agat aut fatiscat, relinquunt: denique siccâ aridâque bucerdâ repletam, luculento igni amastam imponunt, coctaque in varios usus apta.

Adhaec calathos, canistros, flcellasve ex hibisco consolidatas hauriendae aquae, et continendo cuivis liquori, magnitudine et forma nostratium sitularum, nunquam perfluentes, solertissimi texunt, interiorem plagam inhabitantes, et in occidua Europaei navem et retia viderunt.

Uterque sexus verenda meloti aut alia quavis pelle tegit: capilli variis anadematibus, crepundiisque intermixti conchulis, cochleis, plurimisque maris ejectamentis conspersi, aureaque crotalia graves, et nonnunquam in vertice virorum, veluti militis galeati pinna, leporis cauda eminet: et quotiescunque ovem aliudve animal mactant, ejus felle se illinunt, folliculumque capillitio innectunt, atque felle bestiae pro salute aegri caesae, prolibant, folliculum verò tugurioli tecto, in quo aeger decumbit, superstitiosi, ut dixi, imponunt.

Ex collo, auribus, et femore catellos, astragalos, crotalia, fila, lineas, funiculosve coralia globulosque Cypreis, eburneis, ferreis vitreisque consertos feminae pendentes habent, in digitis varios condylos, et in utroque carpo ferme eadem cimelia.

Viri caudam pardalis, vulpis, felisve odoratae aliorumve animalium bacillo superinductam, ad cubiti longitudinem, ut plurimum dextrâ euntes sedentesve tenent, quâ gramini sudantesque, vicè pannuli aut sudarii, se abstergunt: iidem coriaceam fasciam, corrigiam aeream cingulum, duos aut tres digitos latum, aliquotiesque ulnas longum, nudis femoribus circumligant, et prope pudicum nodo constringunt, prope dentibus utrimque ejus extremitatibus seminudae longitudine, et caudarum similitudine inter clunes.

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323 *) This account of potmaking by the Hottentots is much more detailed than any previous mention, and is on the whole an accurate description of a process still employed by some natives of S. Africa.

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

length. The first step is to mould the clay into a circle to form the bottom of the pot; then by further moulding they make a deep or wide vessel as suits their fancy and the law of proportion; this is polished and smoothed inside and out with the fingers and with a sea-shell, and smeared all over with a red colouring matter rather like minium; the pot is then left for a day or two in the same house in which it was made, well covered with a skin or mat so that it may not get too much air or wind, and so dry too quickly and fall into cracks; finally the pot is stuffed with dry cowdung, provided with handles and placed on a bright fire. After baking it is ready for various uses.[1])

Furthermore the inhabitants of the interior are very skilful in making closely-woven pails or baskets of reeds for drawing water or holding any sort of liquid. They are about the size and shape of our buckets and are perfectly water-tight. In the western parts Europeans have seen weels and nets (of native manufacture).

Both men and women cover their private parts with a sheepskin or some other kind of skin.[1]) Their hair is sprinkled over with various ornaments and gauds, including coral-shells, snail-shells, and many things cast up by the sea, their ears are heavy with pendants; and sometimes the men have the tail of a hare standing up on their crown like the plume in a soldier's helmet. Whenever they kill a sheep or any other animal, they smear themselves with the gall and twine the gall-bladder with their hair. But if the animal has been slain for the cure of a sick man, they superstitiously make libation of the gall, and put the gall-bladder, as I have said, on the roof of the hut in which the sick man is.

Hanging from neck, ears, and thighs the women wear chains, loops, pendants, threads, cords and strings of coral, or copper, ivory, iron or glass beads; on their fingers are various rings, and on both wrists, as a rule, similar treasures.

The men, whether walking or sitting, generally carry in the right hand the tail of a panther, fox, skunk or other animal drawn over a stick a cubit's length; and this serves them in place of handkerchief or towel to wipe away rheum or sweat. The men likewise have a leathern band, sash, or girdle, two or three fingers wide and several ells in length, which they bind round their bare thighs and tie in a knot near the rump. The two ends of it hang down like a tail between the buttocks to the length of half an ell.

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[1]) The following description of Hottentot clothing is very slight, but in substantial agreement with those given by other writers.

Ti χamas! My lioness! 542

!Gaibida ǂoets! Art thou afraid that I will bewitch 539
thee?

Gomasa ke ǂausi ǁgeni !omasi!

Thou milkest the cow with a fleshy hand—*i.e.*, with a soft hand.

Natere! Bite me—*i.e.*, kiss me!

ǂGabi-ǂkhatere! Pour for me (milk)!

Ti χamas! My lioness.

Gei khoits ǃaus! Great man's daughter.

The uncle always calls his niece, the brother's or [401]
sister's daughter, "*Ti χamas*," my lioness.

The highest oath a man could take and still takes, was 542
to swear by his eldest sister, and if he should abuse this 541
name, the sister will walk into his flock and take his 577
finest cows and sheep, and no law could prevent her 576
from doing so. A man never can address his own sister personally; he must speak to another person to address the sister in his name, or in absence of anybody, he says so that his sister can hear, "I wish that somebody will tell my sister that I wish to have a drink of milk," &c., &c. The eldest sister can inflict even punishment on a grown-up brother, if he omits the established traditional rules of courtesy and the code of etiquette.

The art of making mats (ǂgaru-ti) and of bending poles 174
(ǂhaua-gu) for their beehive-shaped mathouses was common to all Khoikhoi; and pottery, and the manufacture of milk-vessels (ǂhoe-ti), and wooden dishes (ǂoreti), and wooden basins and bowls (a-χu-ti or ǂgabi-ti), must also have been established before their pre-historic migration took place, for the substance of which their pots are made is the same, clay and ground-quartz. I have frag- [172]
ments of pots dug from the shores of the Southern Cape Colony, and from the outskirts of the Kalihari, which in shape and substance show no difference; and the Namaquas of the present day still make pots in the old 323
style, though traders sell to them iron pots very cheap

(pot sū-s, to boil, to cook sūi).